

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
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Remarks

FOR YOUR DIRECT RESPONSE.

STAT

Executive Secretary

6 June 85

Date

Executive Registry

85- 1839/1

WILLIAM McM. ADAMS

STAT

May 30, 1985

Mr. William J. Casey
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Langley, Virginia 23365

Dear Director Casey:

I would appreciate a reply to my letter to you
of April 30, 1985, a copy of which I enclose.

Yours sincerely,



Col. Wm. M. Adams

WMA/bt
Enclosure



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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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made to learn the experiences of the Germans in the production of synthetic rubber and make use of them in the American program (Jesse Jones had been charged with overlooking this possibility). The effort was made but yielded no results of any value. Under such conditions it is necessary to assume that somebody in America looked into new developments in Germany in as close detail as possible at the time, and the new German development in rubber in 1942 was Auschwitz, the site of the most advanced developments in Buna rubber at that time.

The point to be made in our discussion of the American rubber crisis of 1942 is that American intelligence must have known what was going on at Auschwitz in that year. Clearly, it would be delightful if we could learn exactly what U.S. military intelligence knew about events in and around Germany during the war. However, intelligence agencies are notoriously reluctant to release such information, even many years after the events in question. With respect to World War II intelligence operations, a few sensational episodes are known but, on the whole, the content of Allied intelligence information has not been divulged. The intelligence relative to Auschwitz will be a long, long time in being made public, if it is ever made public.

In attempting to estimate, therefore, what information was possessed by Allied intelligence agencies, one must proceed very much on the basis of common sense. The difficulty is that my common sense may differ very much from another's, and that agreement on such matters may be most difficult to arrive at. Now, my common sense tells me that, quite apart from the rubber crisis, Allied intelligence would have known, in mid-1942, what was happening at the largest German concentration camp. If additionally, as every version of the extermination legend asserts, there had been anything as outé as a program of systematic extermination of Jews at Auschwitz in the summer of 1942, then my common sense tells me that it is a certainty that U.S. military intelligence would have known about it.

If another's common sense does not lead him to the same conclusion it is very doubtful that the disagreement could be settled by discussion. However with Auschwitz we have the fact that it was of interest not only as a large concentration camp (and also, if the extermination claims were correct, an extermination camp), but also as the site of the most advanced developments in synthetic rubber. In 1942, no location in the German Reich was of greater interest, and no industrial operations of greater strategic importance. Therefore, if one wishes to claim that U.S. (or the closely related British) intelligence did not know what was happening at Auschwitz in the summer of 1942, then I am afraid that one must logically claim the complete ignorance and incompetence of these intelligence agencies.

Auschwitz was of the greatest interest to the U.S. in mid-1942 on account of its enormous technological significance. Above we saw Howard's great interest, in 1940, in any information about possible new developments that could be obtained directly or inferred indirectly. A similar interest on the part of the Americans in 1942 must be assumed. It is a certainty that intelligence had developed the basic facts about the industry at Auschwitz: a plant for hydrogenation and other chemical processes aimed at producing gasoline and rubber. It has been seen that each one of the German Buna rubber plants employed processes differing in important details from the others and that the Auschwitz processes were to be the beneficiary of accumulated experiences with several different versions. We are thus justified in assuming, on account of the peculiar urgency of the rubber problem and the

gone into unusual detail in regard to Auschwitz, probably going over very much via aerial photographic intelligence, and that the associated information was available to various people in the U.S. The information probably included many details not readily relevant to the rubber problem, such as the employment of prisoner and POW labor at Auschwitz.

Although concealment of information has been the rule in the area of military intelligence, we can nevertheless assume that the means of gathering intelligence data on Auschwitz included more or less conventional methods: exploitation of contacts with commercial representatives of Farben who were stationed in neutral countries (Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Sweden, Switzerland), aerial photographic intelligence (aircraft used for such purposes may always have longer ranges than bombers on account of their lack of armament), general knowledge of German industrial and economic matters, spies and informers in German industry and in the German Government (e.g. Admiral Canaris), and informers in the employ of advantageously situated neutral organizations (such as the Swiss and Swedish diplomatic corps and also firms doing business in Germany). Although all of these means no doubt played a role, photographic intelligence was probably particularly important; the technology of photographic intelligence had attained a respectable level in 1942 so that a "you are there" effect was possible in blown-up aerial photos of even heavily defended positions. There were other channels of information, whose nature and existence are of some particular importance here, and which will be discussed in due course.

Not being sufficiently acquainted with the technical problems that were associated with Buna at the time, we have no idea what information the Americans might have been after and how it could be inferred from the intelligence data, any more than we have an understanding of what questions were on the minds of the Standard people at the Basle meeting and how partial answers could be inferred from the legal ritual that took place at that meeting. We can, however, offer one possibility by way of example without any claim that such was the specific case.

We have seen that the first German Buna plant at Schkopau employed a carbide-acetylene-butadiene process and that at the Huels plant the process was hydrocarbons-acetylene-butadiene. The new plant at Ludwigshafen, nearing completion when the Baruch Committee was meeting, had reverted to making the acetylene from carbide and had modernized the acetylene to butadiene stage. Since either a carbide or a hydrocarbons process was potentially applicable to the processes to be employed in the U.S. (which could have started from oil or grain alcohol) it was no doubt of great interest whether Auschwitz was to employ a carbide process (as was the case), suggesting abandonment of the hydrocarbons version on the basis of the Huels experience, or was to employ a hydrocarbons or other process, suggesting failure to make a commitment to carbide processes. Moreover the carbide vs. hydrocarbons question could probably be answered on the basis of aerial intelligence, if necessary.

What was the ultimate value, in terms of the problems the Americans faced, of the detailed information about contemporary German Buna developments which, we feel certain, they examined closely approximately in middle-late 1942? Perhaps none, as was the case with most categories of information; it is just that you don't miss a bet in the sort of situation in which the Americans found themselves regarding rubber in 1942.

Consideration of technical matters has been necessary here because it was in a technical context that Auschwitz first became prominent in